AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An antimicrobial composition consisting essentially of ~~comprising~~ a synergistic antimicrobial effective amount of a mixture of:

(a) a first component including one or more aldehyde donors selected from the group consisting of 1,3-dimethylol-5,5-dimethylhydantoin, 1-methylol-5,5-dimethylhydantoin, 3-methylol-5,5-dimethylhydantoin, 1-methylol-3-methyloloxymethyl-5,5-dimethylhydantoin, 1,3-dimethyloloxymethyl-5,5-dimethylhydantoin, or mixtures thereof;

(b) a second component including a stabilizer which is dimethylhydantoin ~~selected from the group consisting of dimethylhydantoin, derivatives of dimethylhydantoin, urea, and derivatives of urea~~; and

(c) a third component including a dehydroacetic acid or salt thereof.

2. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the dehydroacetic acid salt is dehydroacetic acid sodium salt.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 1 ~~3~~, wherein the ~~alkanol-substituted dimethylhydantoin~~ aldehyde donor is a mixture of dimethyloldimethylhydantoin and monomethyloldimethylhydantoin.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein the mixture is substantially free of iodine.

8. (Original) The composition of claim 1, wherein the mixture has a free formaldehyde concentration of less than 0.2% by weight, based on 100% weight of the mixture.

9. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the first component is present in the mixture in an amount of between about 20% to about 95% by weight, based on 100% by weight of the mixture.

10. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1 wherein the second component is present in the mixture an amount up to about 30% by weight, based on 100% weight of the mixture.

11. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the third component is present in the mixture in an amount of between about 0.5% to about 40% by weight, based on 100% weight of the mixture.

12. (Withdrawn) A method of preparing a synergistic antimicrobial composition which comprises blending 20 to 95 parts of an aldehyde donor and 5 to 20 parts of a stabilizer or derivative thereof to form a homogeneous mixture, mixing a solvent and 1 to 40 parts of DHA or salt thereof with the foregoing mixture to obtain a homogeneous solution containing a total formaldehyde content of at least 2% and less than 0.2% free formaldehyde.

13. (Withdrawn) A method of inhibiting the growth of or reducing microorganisms comprising applying a synergistically antimicrobial effective amount of the composition of claim 1.

14. (Withdrawn) A method of inhibiting the growth of or reducing microorganisms in personal care products such as shampoos, conditioners, rinses, creams, lotions, cosmetics, soaps, dental products such as mouthwash, toothpaste, spray, denture cleaners and denture soaks, baby wipes and other woven and non-woven wipes; household products such as laundry detergents, hard surface cleaners, fabric softeners; and industrial products such as paint, wood, wood treatment, paper board, sheet rock, paper pulp, ceiling tiles, textiles, adhesives, sealants, leather, rope, plastics,

petroleum, fuel, oil, and rubber and metal working fluids; comprising applying an effective amount of the composition of claim 1 to the personal care product, household product, or industrial product.

15. (Withdrawn) A method of inhibiting the growth of or reducing microorganisms in industrial systems such as pulp and papermaking processing; water treatment systems; cooling water; swimming pools and spas; decorative fountains; membranes; brewery pasteurizers; toilet and urinal applications; food and beverage sanitation; sporicidal formulations; sterilization of clinical products and surgical instruments, and preservation, including clay slurry and starch, comprising applying an effective amount of the composition of claim 1 to the industrial system.

16. (Withdrawn) A personal care, household, or industrial product comprising the composition of claim 1.

17. (Withdrawn) A personal care, household, or industrial product which comprises an effective amount of a mixture of a first component including one or more aldehyde donor, and a second component including dimethylhydantoin, and a third component including dehydroacetic acid.

18. (Withdrawn) The product of claim 17 wherein the product is a household or industrial product selected from the group consisting of fabric softeners, laundry detergents, hard surface cleaners, paint, wood, wood treatment, paper board, sheet rock, paper pulp, ceiling tiles, textiles, adhesives, sealants, leather, rope, plastics, petroleum, fuel, oil, and rubber and metal working fluids.

19. (Withdrawn) The product of claim 17 wherein the product is a personal care product selected from the group consisting of shampoos, conditioners, rinses, creams, lotions, cosmetics, soaps, mouthwash, toothpaste, spray, denture cleaners and denture soaks, baby wipes and other woven and non-woven wipes.

20. (Currently amended) An antimicrobial composition consisting essentially of ~~comprising~~:

(a) a mixture of dimethyloldimethylhydantoin and monomethyloldimethylhydantoin;

(b) dimethylhydantoin; and

(c) dehydroacetic acid or a salt thereof.

21. (Previously presented) The antimicrobial composition of claim 20, where the composition has a free formaldehyde concentration less than 0.5% by weight.

22. (Currently amended) The antimicrobial composition of claim 20, where the ratio of (a) to (c) ~~(b)~~ is from about 0.05:30 to 30:0.05.

23. (Previously presented) The antimicrobial composition of claim 1, wherein the composition is free of isothiazolones.

24. (New) The antimicrobial composition of claim 1, wherein

(a) the first component is present in an amount from about 5% to about 95%;

(b) the second component is present in an amount up to about 30%; and

(c) the third component is present in an amount from about 0.5% to about 95%,

based on 100% total weight of the mixture.

25. (New) The antimicrobial composition of claim 20, wherein

(a) the first component is present in an amount from about 5% to about 95%;

(b) the second component is present in an amount up to about 30%; and

(c) the third component is present in an amount from about 0.5% to about 95%,

based on 100% total weight of the composition.